

Today, middle class parents know that in the awful event their child is disabled in an accident and their savings are gone, they'll get help to keep the child at home. Under the Republican plan, hundreds of thousands of disabled children could lose help for home care.

Earlier this week, I had the pleasure of meeting the Striggles family from Forestville, Maryland. Franklin Striggles works hard as a security guard. He and his wife, Denise, have health insurance from his job. But it doesn't begin to pay the cost of caring for their son, Angelo, an energetic 7-year-old who has spina bifida, and who's now confined to a wheelchair. That's where Medicaid comes in. With Medicaid, this working family can keep a job, raise and educate their other children, and give little Angelo good care. To see Angelo and his family, it's clear how much love and learning he gets from living at home with his brother and sister. It pains me to think that if the Striggles family lost Medicaid coverage, Angelo could be torn from his family, even forced to be placed in a State institution.

If the Republican cuts in Medicaid take effect, the blunt reality is that as many as 4 million children will simply be denied needed medical care. They'll either be turned away from medical facilities, denied preventive care, or be turned out too soon. That is unacceptable in a country that cares about its children. And I will not permit it to happen.

Yes, the deficit is a burden on future generations but so is the neglect of our children. And we do not have to sacrifice our children to balance the budget. That's why I vetoed these cuts last week. Now, some Republicans continue to insist on unconscionable cuts in health care for our children as part of a balanced budget.

So I'll say once more: If necessary, I'll veto these deep cuts in health care for children again and again and again. I'll do it because they are not necessary to balance the budget. And they, too, will place an awful burden on future generations.

My 7-year balanced budget plan trims Medicaid and keeps costs down. It cuts Federal spending, lets States be more efficient, targets the money more wisely. But it doesn't

end the guarantee of health care for millions of Americans who depend upon it now.

We expect every family to pay its bills and to care for its children. Well, our country can do the same. We don't have to hurt our children to balance the budget.

It's time for men and women of both parties to put aside their narrow interests and extreme ideology and together pursue the national interest. I have reached out to bridge the differences between us so that our country can move forward. If we'll all just work together and keep our eye on the future, we can get this job done.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5:57 p.m. on December 8 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on December 9.

### Interview With Quinn Buckner of CBS Sports in Fayetteville, Arkansas December 9, 1995

**Mr. Buckner.** I'm here with the First Fan. All right, now you're undefeated. Your team is now 33-24. If you had a chance to write out a play, what would you write for Nolan Richards?

**The President.** I just think they need a chance to get a better shot. Cincinnati is a great defensive team. Looking at these games they're winning and the teams they're beating at very low scores, and our guys are great athletes, but they're freshmen. They're junior college transfers. They're just learning to play together. They have great potential, but Cincinnati is a great defensive team. We've got to figure out a way to break their defense to get good shots, and then they'll win the game.

**Mr. Buckner.** Are you having much fun doing this? I mean, how often do you get to watch the Razorbacks?

**The President.** Wherever they're on television I try to watch them, and then if I'm working at night, I try to have somebody film it so I can watch it later. I try to get down here to see a couple of games a year, and then if they get in the NCAA, of course, I try to see them a time or two.

NOTE: The interview began at 1:10 p.m. at Bud Walton Arena.

**Remarks at a Dinner Honoring  
Senator David Pryor in Little Rock,  
Arkansas**

*December 9, 1995*

Thank you very much, Jimmie Lou. I will treasure this always. I wish you could have gotten me a ballot of a precinct that I carried. [Laughter] You know, I ran in Sebastian County a zillion times, and I started in 1974. It took me until 1990, where I finally carried it. [Laughter] But thanks to some of you in this room, it finally happened. I thank you very much. I thank you, Jimmie Lou Fisher, for being my dear friend and for introducing me in October of 1991 on the steps of the Old State Capitol. You seem to bring good luck to me and to everyone else whom you touch.

I thank Maurice Mitchell and Skip Rutherford and everyone else who had anything to do with this dinner tonight. Chairman Gibson; my dear friend Mack McLarty, who came out with me tonight and who has done a wonderful job on all of our behalfs in Washington; I'm so grateful to him for being there with me these last 3 years. To Congresswoman Blanche Lambert Lincoln; if there is a living soul in this country who can change a deer season, it's her. [Laughter] I've gotten to where when she starts coming at me, I just say yes before she ever says anything. It saves a lot of time and a lot of energy, always the same result. [Laughter]

Senator Bumpers, you do not have to get off the back door tomorrow. [Laughter] But however, after a few of those jokes tonight, I hope you won't mind if I ask you to board by the back door. [Laughter]

I want to say that I am profoundly grateful to Dale Bumpers for what he's done for our State and what he's done for our Nation and for the kind of voice that he's been in the United States Senate for all of these 18 years or 22 years or however long he's been there—since—it seemed like before I could vote—[laughter]—but never more than the last 2 years when he has found that soaring eloquence in the service of views that seemed

to be fading from fashion until the last few months. And it's because people like Dale Bumpers speak up in the lean times as well as the good ones that this country stays on the path to progress and keeps its common sense about it, and I'm very grateful to him, and all of you should be as well.

So, Governor Tucker, let me say I hope you pass your bond issue, and I hope you pass a constitution. He was too gracious to say it, but when he was reeling off all of the names of the Governors that tried to get a new constitution, he could have said, had he been less gracious, that we all failed. [Laughter] But that doesn't mean we don't need one. And I am especially grateful to you for taking on a lot of tough issues that are often thankless because you know that 10 or 20 or 30 years from now, if we do these things, people will look back and say, "Thank you very much. It might not have been popular at the time and it certainly wasn't easy at the time, but it was the right thing to do." And that's the kind of Governor you've been, and I am very grateful to you for it.

To Senator Pryor and Barbara and all of the Pryor family, let me say I am very honored to be here tonight. Hillary wishes she could be here. She called David; they had a long conversation this morning. Neither one of them would tell me everything they discussed. But she loves you very much, as you know, and wishes that she could be here with you. But our daughter is engaged in an activity tonight that required her presence in Washington, and I know you understand that. But she and I feel a special debt to you and a special bond.

Ladies and gentlemen, I've got to be honest with you: I'm kind of like Dale. This is a night I hoped would never come. I'm glad you showed up, and I thank you for your devotion to the Democratic Party and to Dale Bumpers and to Jim Guy Tucker and to our Congressman and our Congresswoman and especially to Senator Pryor. But I hoped that this night would never come.

You know how there are just things in life you assume would go on forever? I just assumed David Pryor's career in the Senate would go on forever. I thought long after I retired from the White House I would be back here with you, you know, wearing his